

DC COMICS

MASTER OF DARKNESS

THE

# SHADE

#1  
OF 12

DEC 2011

RATED T+ TEEN PLUS

JAMES  
**ROBINSON**

CULLY  
**HAMNER**

HARRIS

[dccomics.com](http://dccomics.com)



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OCTOBER  
BRINGS  
MELANCHOLY.



EACH YEAR, EVERY YEAR, I FEEL THE SAME. LADEN AND SLUGGISH. NO APPETITE.

WELL, THAT'S NOT GOOD. ANY IDEA WHY?

IT COULD SIMPLY BE SUMMER'S EBB. BUT NO, I'D BE LYING IF I SAID I THOUGHT *THAT* WAS THE CAUSE. I KNOW WHY. I ALWAYS HAVE.

THIS IS THE MONTH OF MY CREATION.

MORE TEA?

BY THE WAY, MIKAAL, YOU RECLAIMING THE MANTLE OF STARMAN AGAIN. OPAL. OPAL'S HERO. HAVE I TOLD YOU HOW GLAD...AND PROUD OF YOU I AM?

YOU REALLY SHOULD HAVE DONE IT SOONER, YOU KNOW THAT?

YES, WELL-- YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE. BUT I WAS HAPPY. I WAS IN LOVE. NOW TONY'S DEAD. WHAT ELSE IS THERE FOR ME?

TRAGEDY, IT SEEMS, IS THE GLOOMY, TATTERED THING ALL US METAS ARE DESTINED TO DRAPE AROUND OUR SHOULDERS.





MY, YOU'RE A **DELIGHT**. TELL ME, DO YOU DROP THESE LITTLE *BON MOTS* ON YOUR GORILLA FRIEND, TOO? HE MUST LOVE THAT. SUCH DRAMA. "GLOOMY, TATTERED THING" INDEED.

HEAVENS, AND I THOUGHT **I** WAS IN A FUNK.



STILL, I PRAY THAT WHAT YOU SAY ISN'T TRUE. I'M IN LOVE, YOU SEE.

THE O'DARE GIRL. HOPE? YES, I KNOW. CONGRATULATIONS.

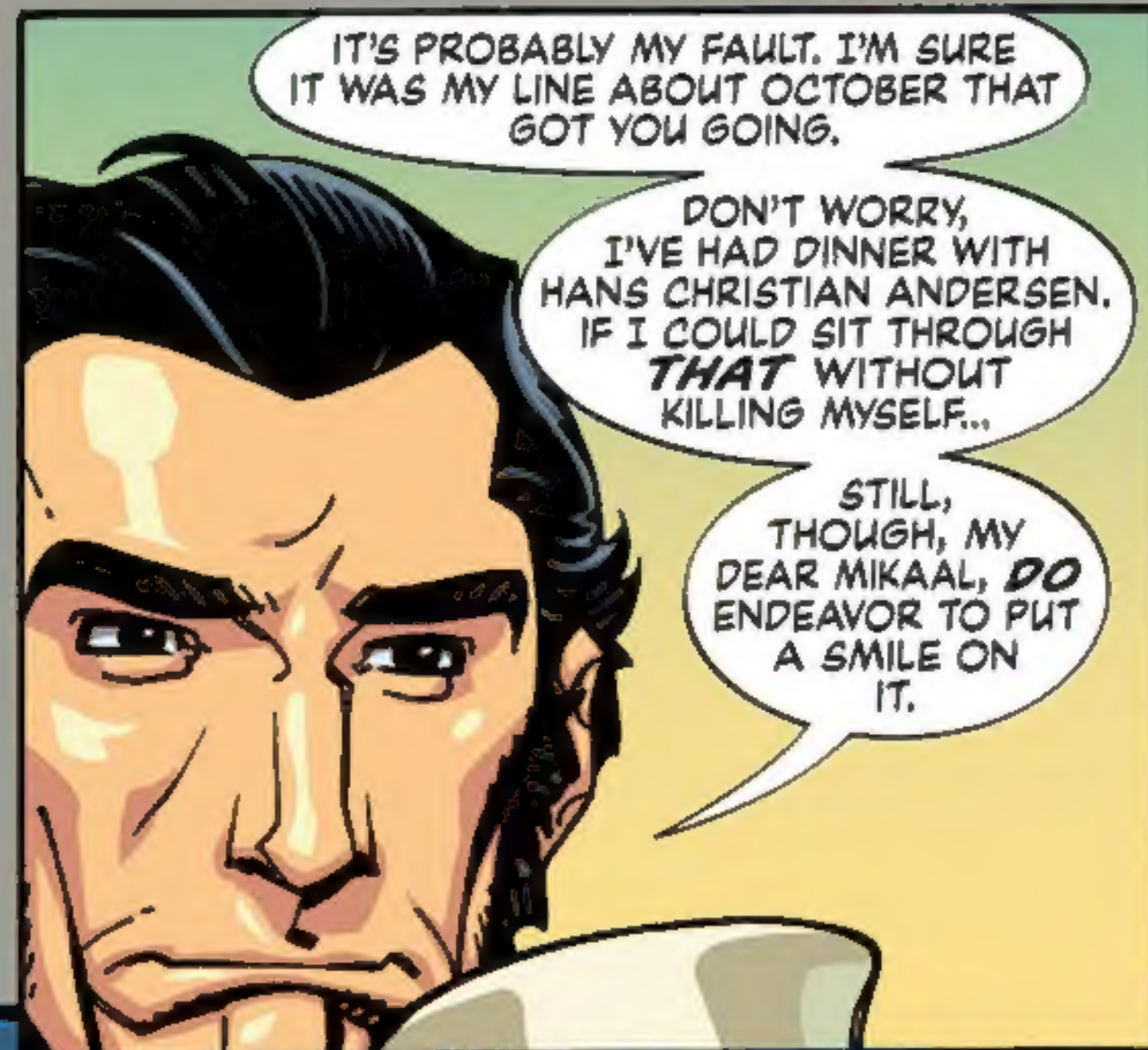


I HAVE TO SAY, I'M GLAD I DON'T HAVE CHILDREN.



I REPEAT: **DELIGHTFUL**. YOU'RE CERTAINLY NOT HELPING MY MOOD. WHY DON'T WE SKIP THE TEA ENTIRELY AND WATCH AN INGMAR BERGMAN FILM? THAT SHOULD ROUND THINGS OFF NICELY.

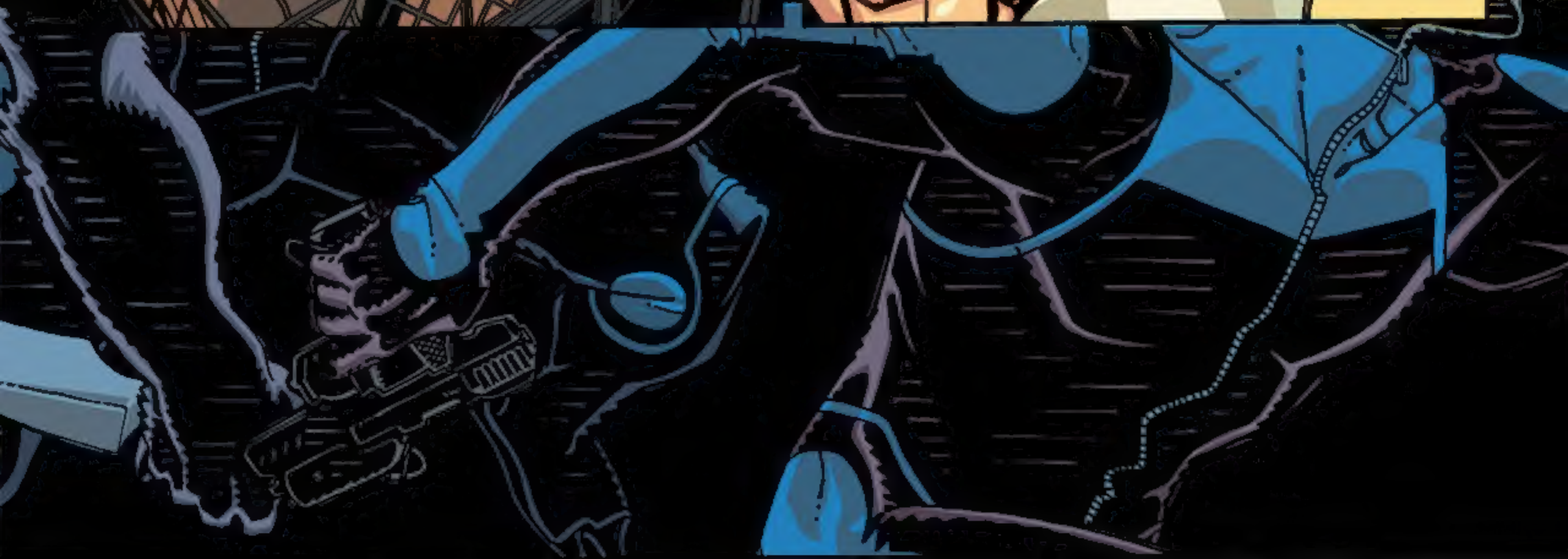
I'M SORRY, SHADE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S COME OVER ME.



IT'S PROBABLY MY FAULT. I'M SURE IT WAS MY LINE ABOUT OCTOBER THAT GOT YOU GOING.

DON'T WORRY, I'VE HAD DINNER WITH HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN. IF I COULD SIT THROUGH **THAT** WITHOUT KILLING MYSELF...

STILL, THOUGH, MY DEAR MIKAAL, **DO** ENDEAVOR TO PUT A SMILE ON IT.







SO, YOU WERE ABOUT TO TELL ME HOW YOU BECAME "THE SHADE." YOUR "SECRET ORIGIN."

I WAS ABOUT TO DO NO SUCH THING.



I MENTIONED OCTOBER BEING THE MONTH OF MY CREATION, BUT I HAVE NO INTENTION OF REVEALING THE HOWS AND WHYS AND ALL THE HORRIFIC EVENTS OF THAT DAY.

ALL I'LL SAY... AGAIN... IS THAT OCTOBER IS THE MONTH OF MY BIRTH, AND AS SUCH... AS SUCH... I'M NOT AT MY BEST.



DO YOU REALLY THINK IT'S POSSIBLE TO LIVE THE LIFE THAT WE DO AND FIND LASTING LOVE?

DEAR GOD, YOU DON'T STOP, DO YOU?

SORRY, BUT NOW MY MIND'S RACING WITH THIS STUFF.



AND CHILDREN? HOW CAN ANY OF US LIVE WITH THE DANGERS WE FACE AND HAVE CHILDREN? I GUESS ANIMAL MAN MANAGES, BUT HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO COMES TO MIND.

I'M AWARE OF THE PRODIGIOUS MR. BAKER, BUT DO I CARE ONE JOT? DO I GIVE A FIG? I DO NOT.



CHILDREN.









...BONSOIR, GOOD EVENING.

NICE TO MEET YOU. WISH THE CIRCUMSTANCES WERE BETTER, BUT WE CAN'T HAVE EVERYTHING, SO--

HOLD ON--

THIS IS GOING TO *HURT*.







MY NAME IS **WILLIAM VON HAMMER**, AND I AM...

A) A MAN CURRENTLY IN GREAT DANGER.

B) A MAN WITH A JOB I INTEND  
TO DO COME HELL OR HIGH WATER.

C) A PRIVATE DETECTIVE.

D) PROBABLY NOT CHARGING  
ENOUGH FOR MY SERVICES.

E) GERMAN.

F) ALL OF THE ABOVE.

THE CHEERFUL FELLOWS SO  
INTENT ON MY WELL-BEING ARE...

A) A CADRE OF BELGIAN  
ASSASSINS KNOWN AS  
**LES DIABOLIQUES**.

B) AFTER MY  
HEAD.

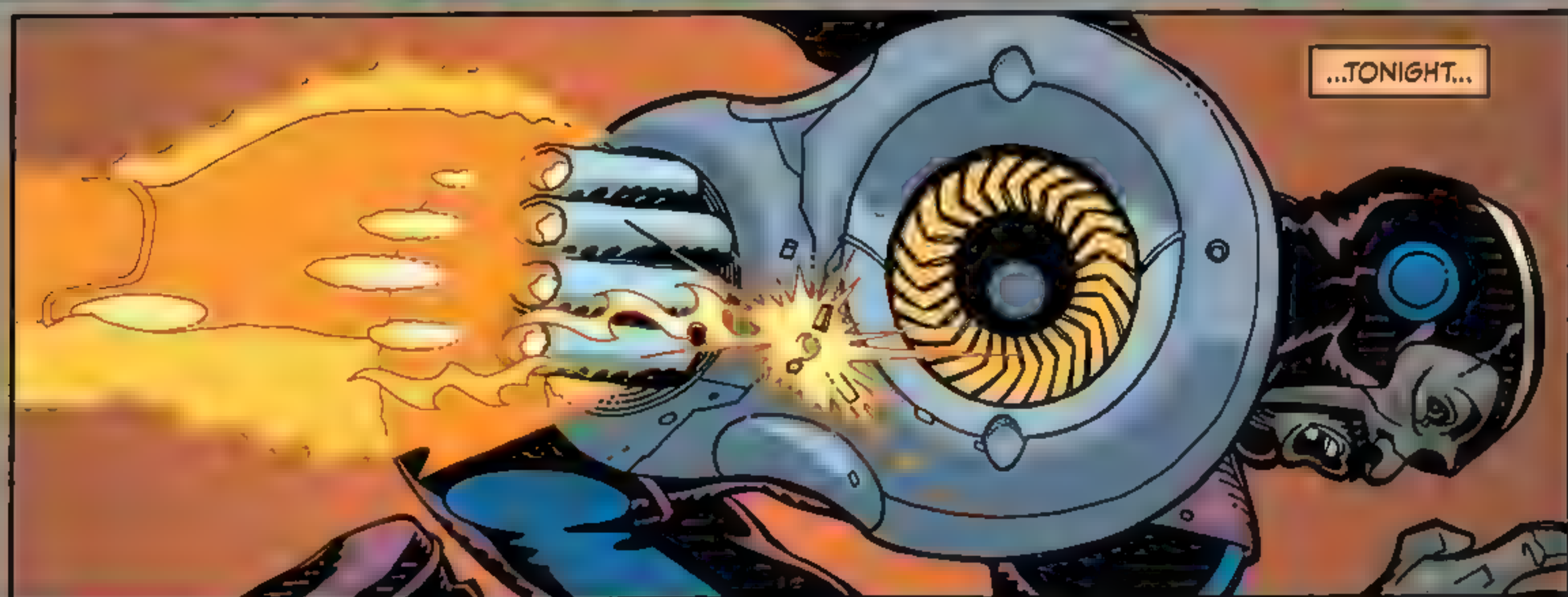
C) ENHANCED WITH DRUGS  
AND EXO-FRAMES TO  
METAHUMAN LEVELS OF  
THE "NOT GOOD FOR YOURS  
TRULY" VARIETY.

D) GETTING ANGRIER BY  
THE MOMENT THAT I'M  
NOT DEAD ALREADY.





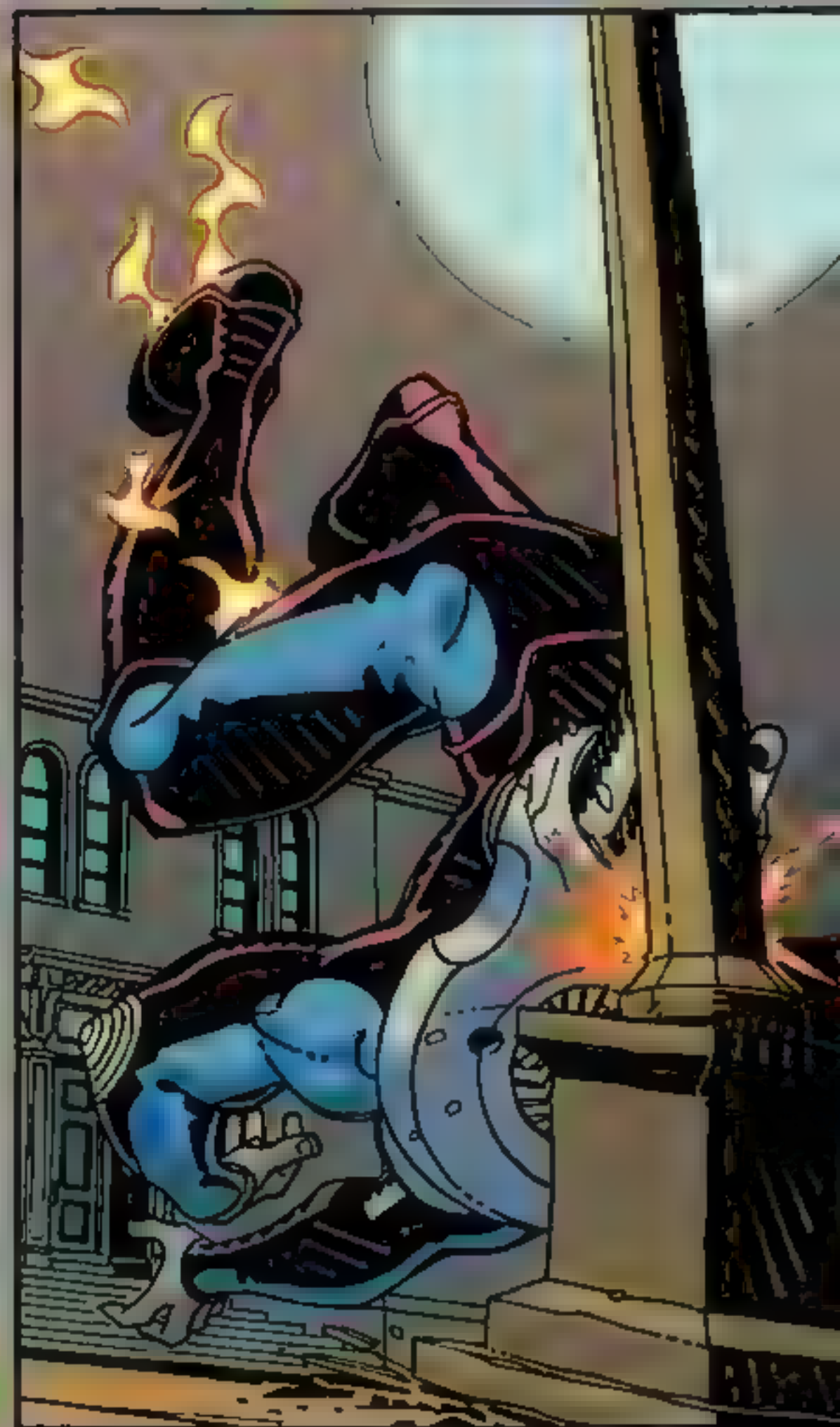
THING IS...THING *THEY*  
DON'T KNOW IS...



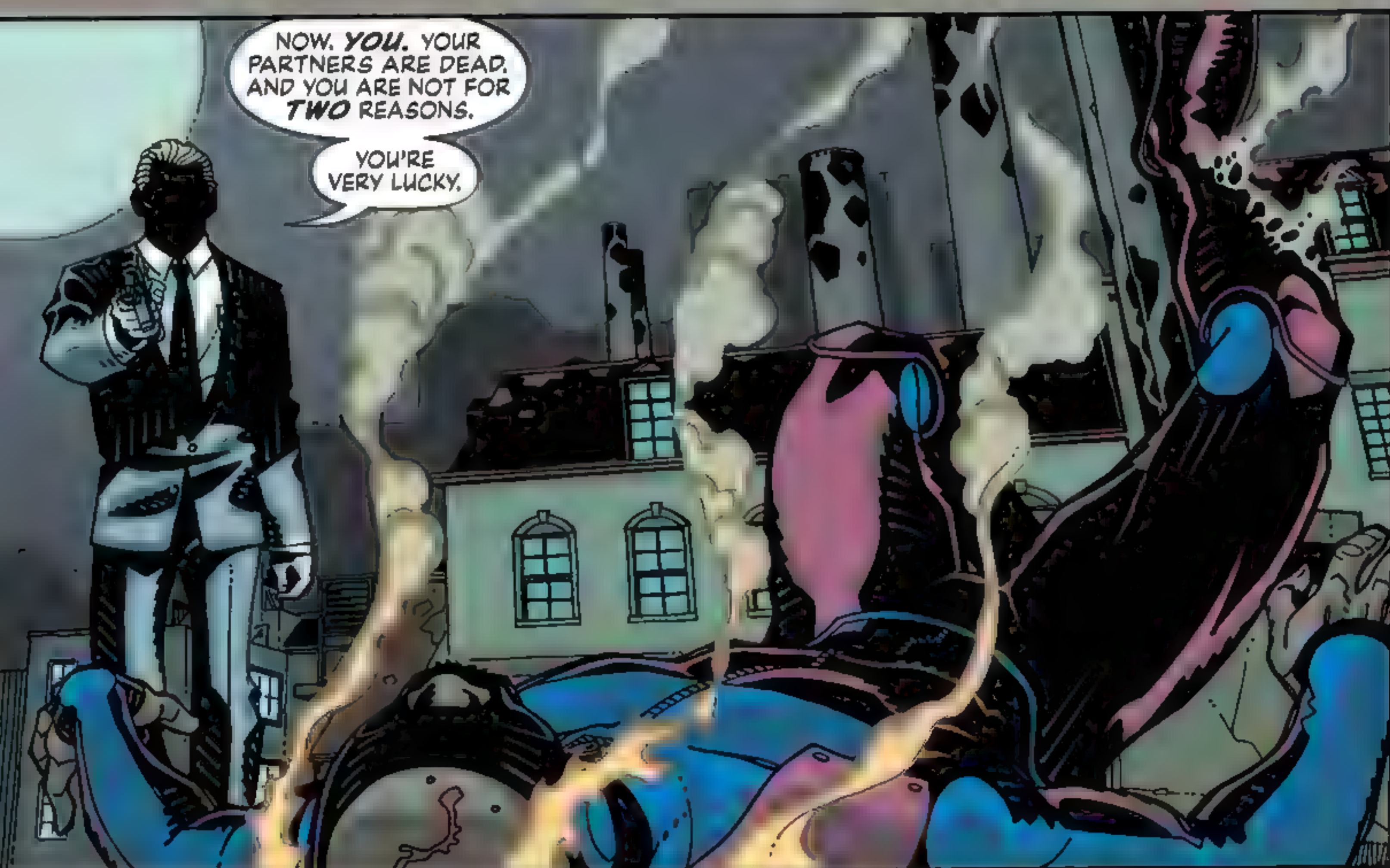
...TONIGHT...



...I'M THE ONLY ONE  
WHO *ISN'T* DYING!







NOW, **YOU**. YOUR PARTNERS ARE DEAD. AND YOU ARE NOT FOR **TWO** REASONS.

YOU'RE VERY LUCKY.



AND BECAUSE I **WISH** IT SO.

WANT TO STAY LUCKY? NO, **MORE IMPORTANTLY**, DO YOU WANT TO KEEP **BREATHING**?

YES? THEN TELL ME... **WHO** PAID YOU TO KILL ME?



PLEASE, MY SUIT--THE **ROCKET-PACK**-- I CAN **FEEL** IT. I THINK IT'S **ABOUT** TO--

FIRST THINGS FIRST.

I'M **BURNING**.



TELL ME.



IT WAS **COLD**--







AM, MY DARLING HOPE. POLICE  
BADGE. PRETTY FACE HOPE  
O'DARE MY LOVE.

I  
TIDIED  
UP.

I SEE.  
YOUR FLAT IS  
BOTH A BASTION  
AND A SHRINE  
TO ORDER.

THOUGH  
KNOWING ME,  
PROBABLY ONLY  
FOR THE NEXT  
FIVE MINUTES.

HOPE. YOU AND I  
ARE DIFFERENT.

DUH. YOU  
THINK?

I THINK IT'S  
THIS DIFFERENCE  
THAT...I THINK  
THAT...

...IF WE ACCEPT IT,  
DARE I SAY EMBRACE  
IT, OUR ROMANCE HAS  
THE BEST CHANCE  
OF LIFE.

MAN,  
DICKIE, WILL  
YOU QUIT WITH  
ALL THE LOVEY-  
LOVE-LOVE? WILL  
WE STAY TOGETHER  
OR NOT? WHO  
KNOWS? ENJOY  
WHAT WE  
HAVE.

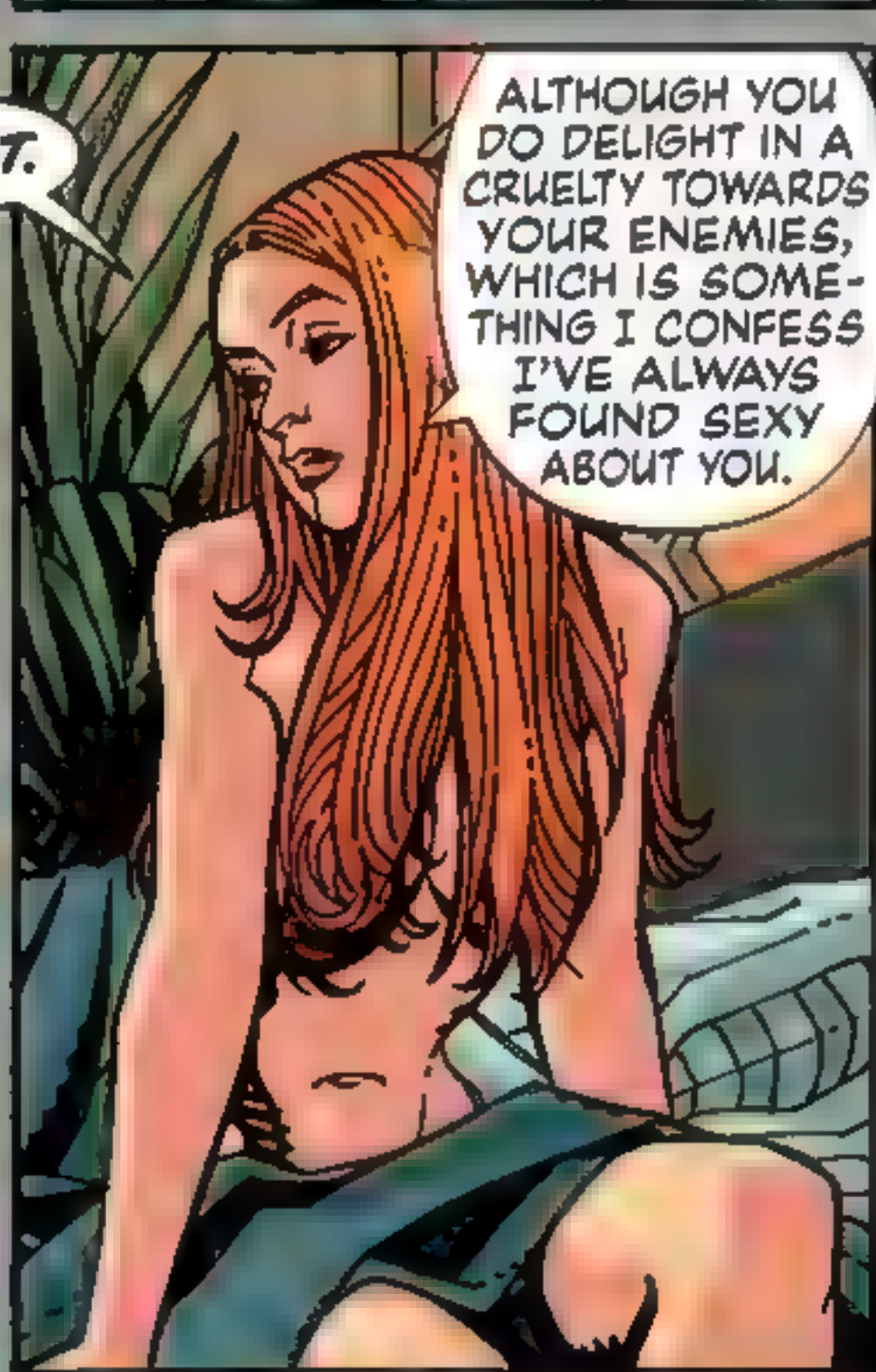
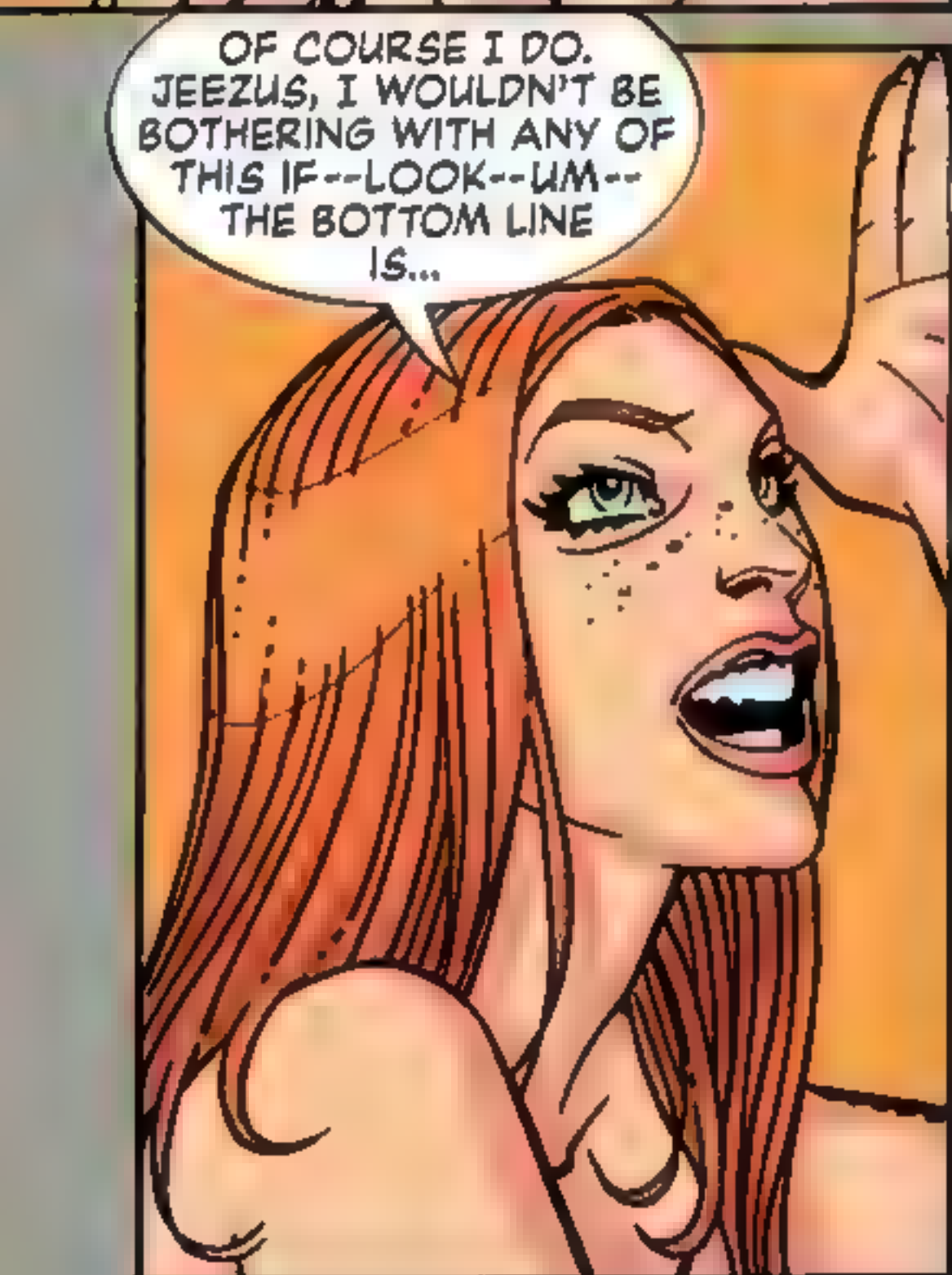
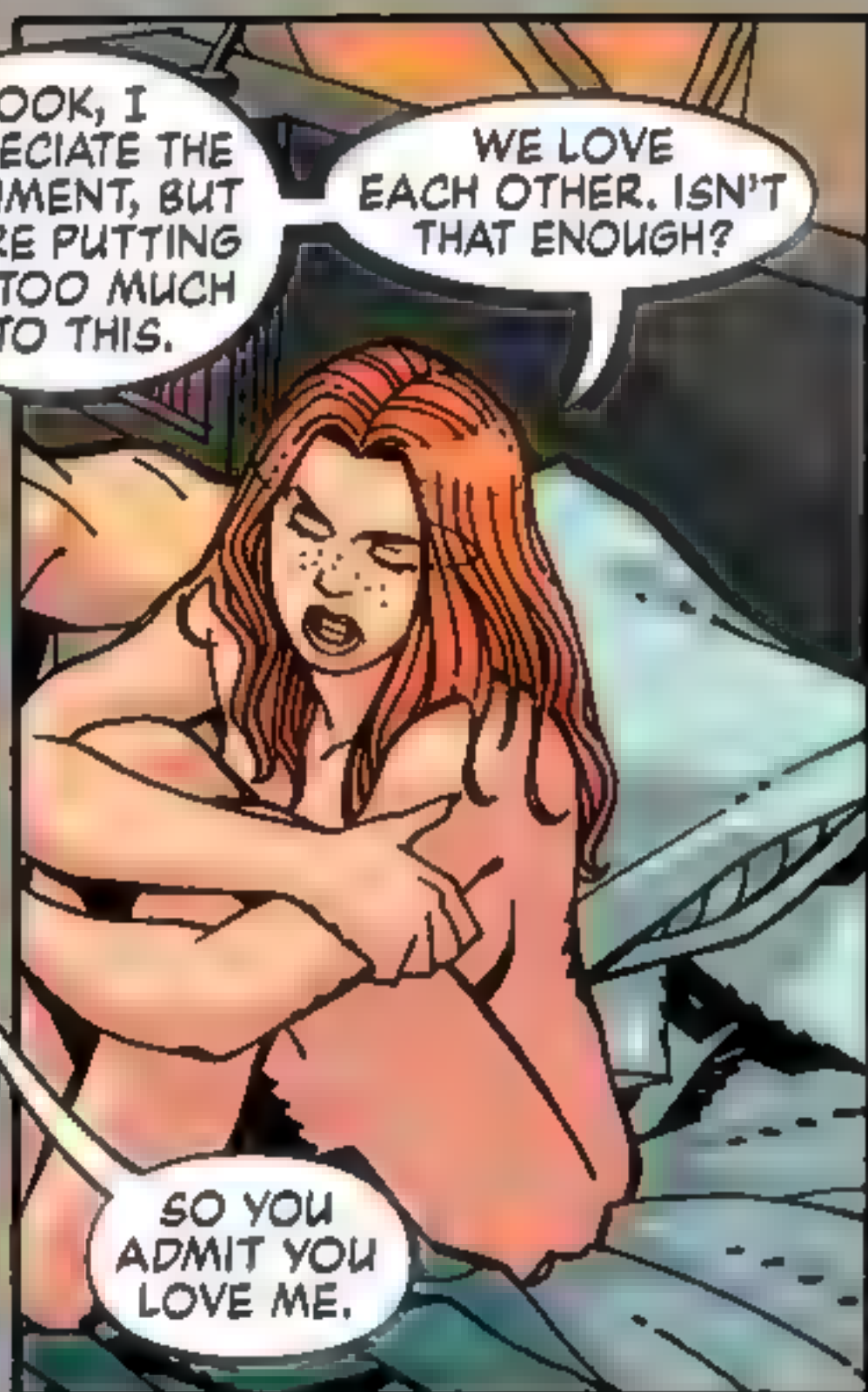
YOU'RE SO BUSY  
BROODING ABOUT "THE  
BREAKUP"--WHICH, I MIGHT  
ADD, HASN'T HAPPENED--THAT  
YOU'VE STOPPED HAVING FUN.

IN FACT,  
I HAVE TO  
SAY...

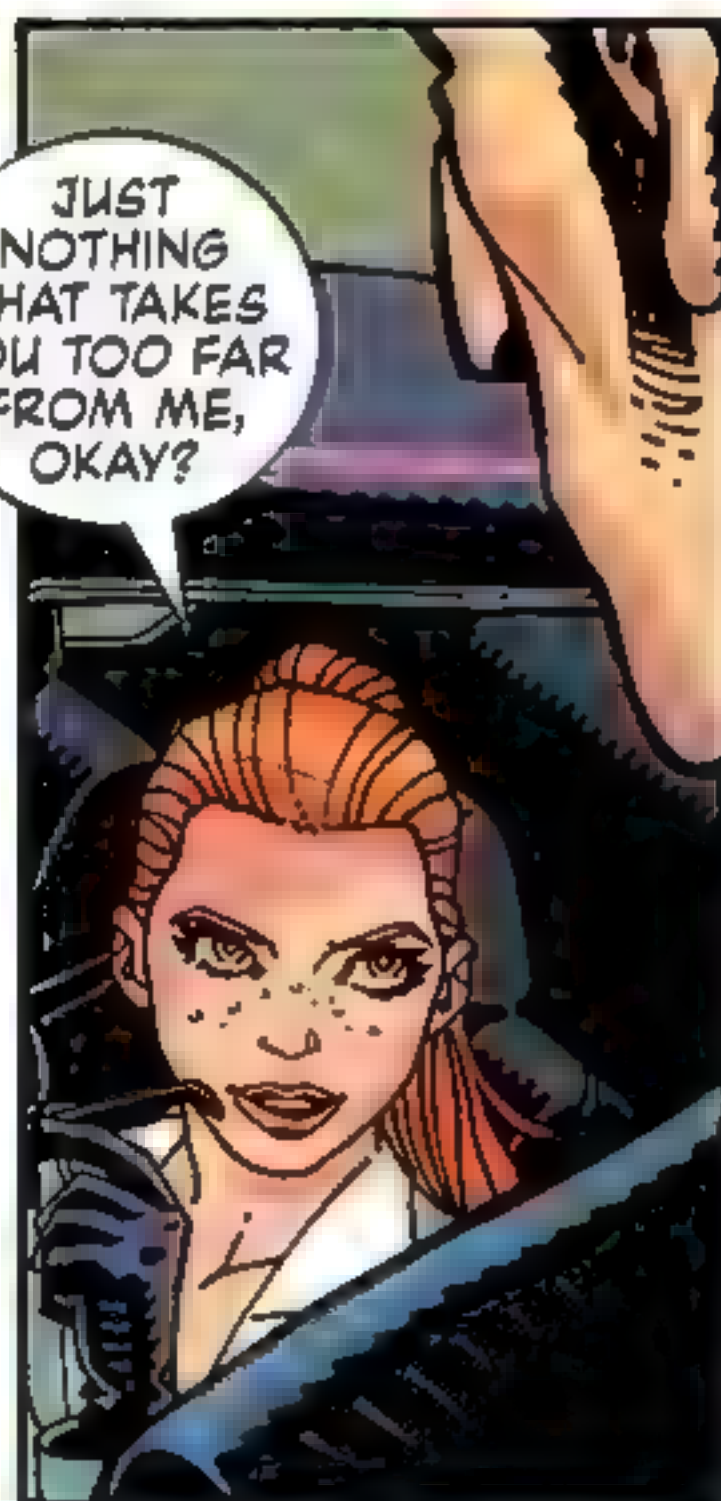
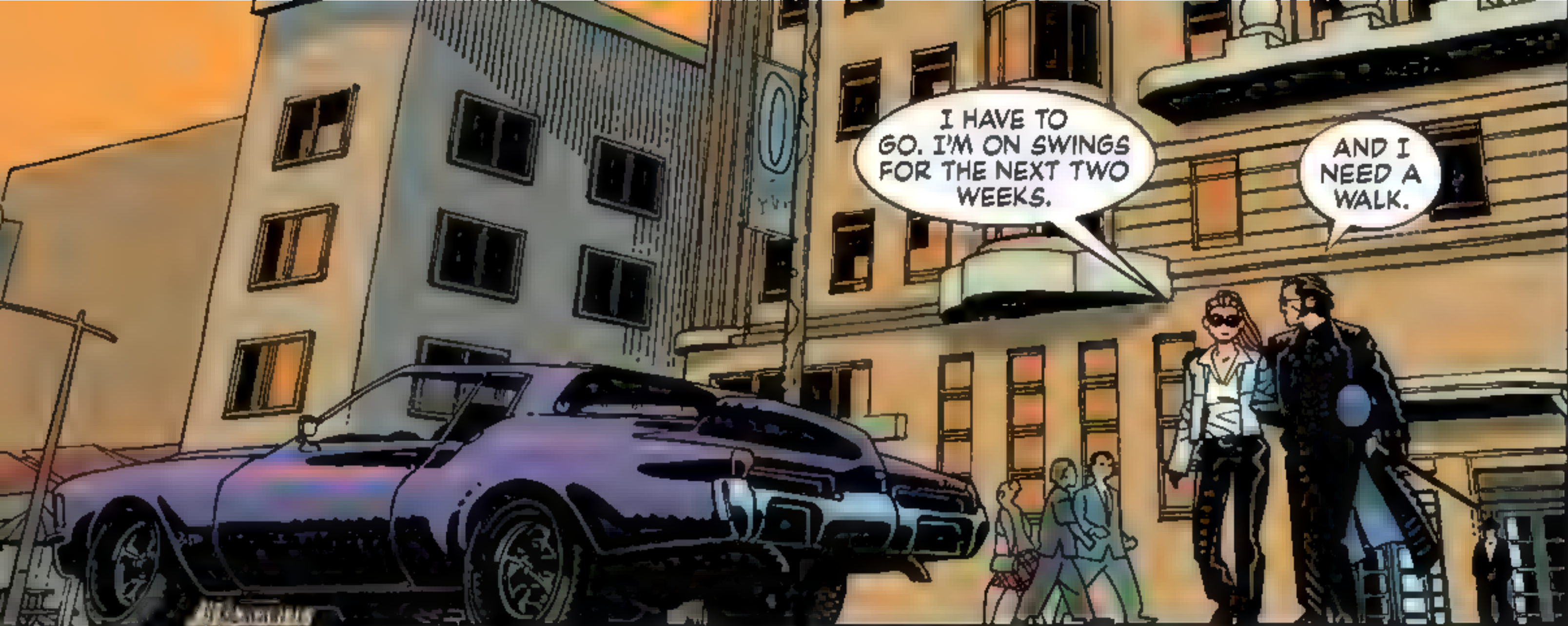
...YOU'VE  
STOPPED **BEING**  
FUN.

WHERE'S  
THAT RASCAL WITH  
THE TWINKLING EYE  
I FELL IN LOVE  
WITH?













AH, OPAL CITY!  
IT HAS ME. IT HOLDS  
ME IN ITS SWAY

HAS, WILL  
ALWAYS

AS DUSK COMES, THE PIGEON-GRA  
SKY AND THE SUN'S DEMISE... ITS  
FINAL DEFIANT HUES OF AMBER  
AND VERMILLION

FRAMING THE SCENE

OH, HOW I WISH J. M. W.  
TURNER WERE ALIVE STILL  
SO HE MIGHT CAPTURE  
THIS WONDER



SO WHAT  
TO DO, RICHARD  
SWIFT? WHAT TO  
DO?

HOPE, MY DARLING,  
YOU'RE RIGHT, OF  
COURSE

I MUST FIND  
SOMETHING  
AN EVENT,  
A QUEST,  
PERHAPS A--



YMMH



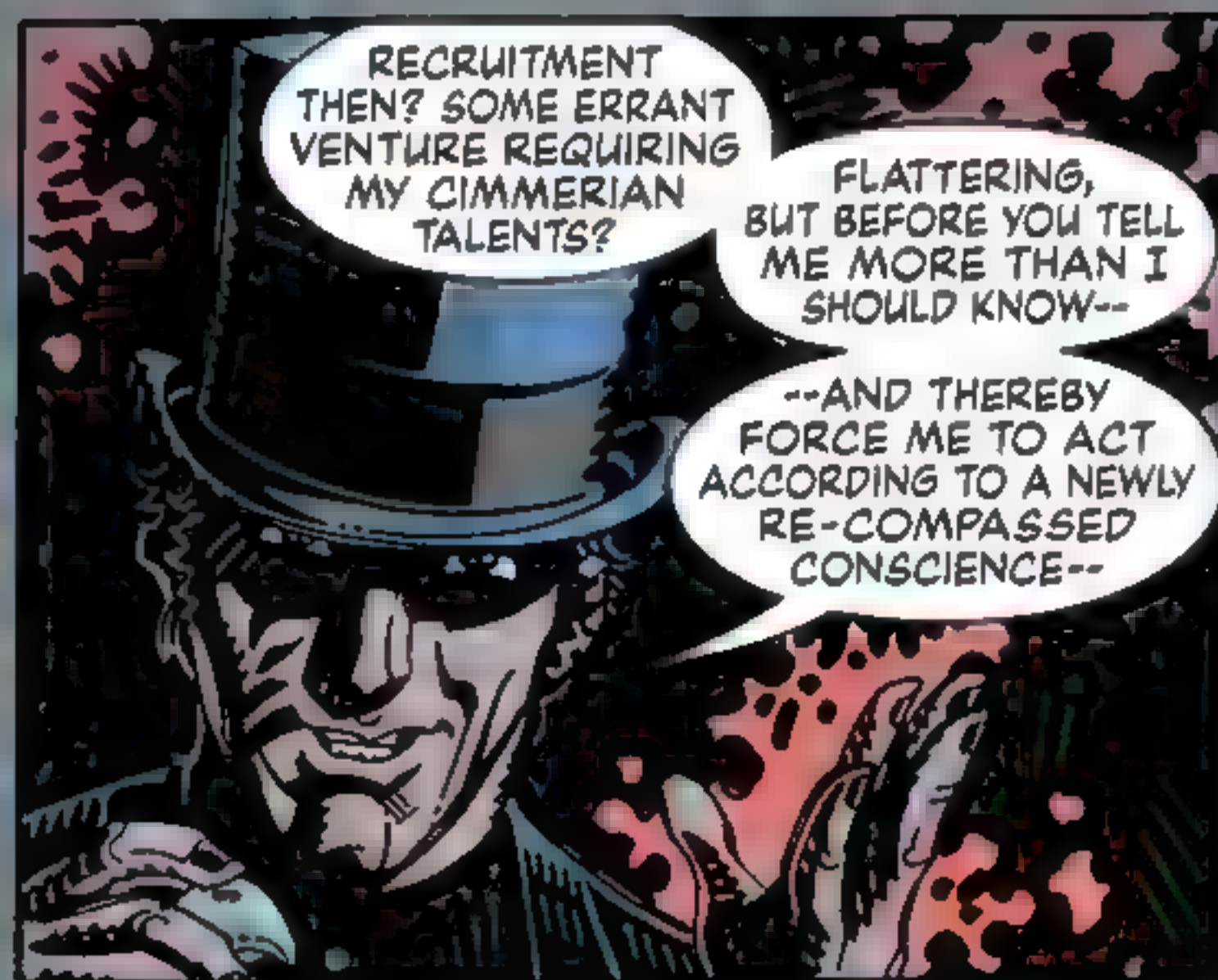
OR PERHAPS  
SOMETHING  
WILL PRESENT  
ITSELF

DEATHSTROKE.

SHADE.



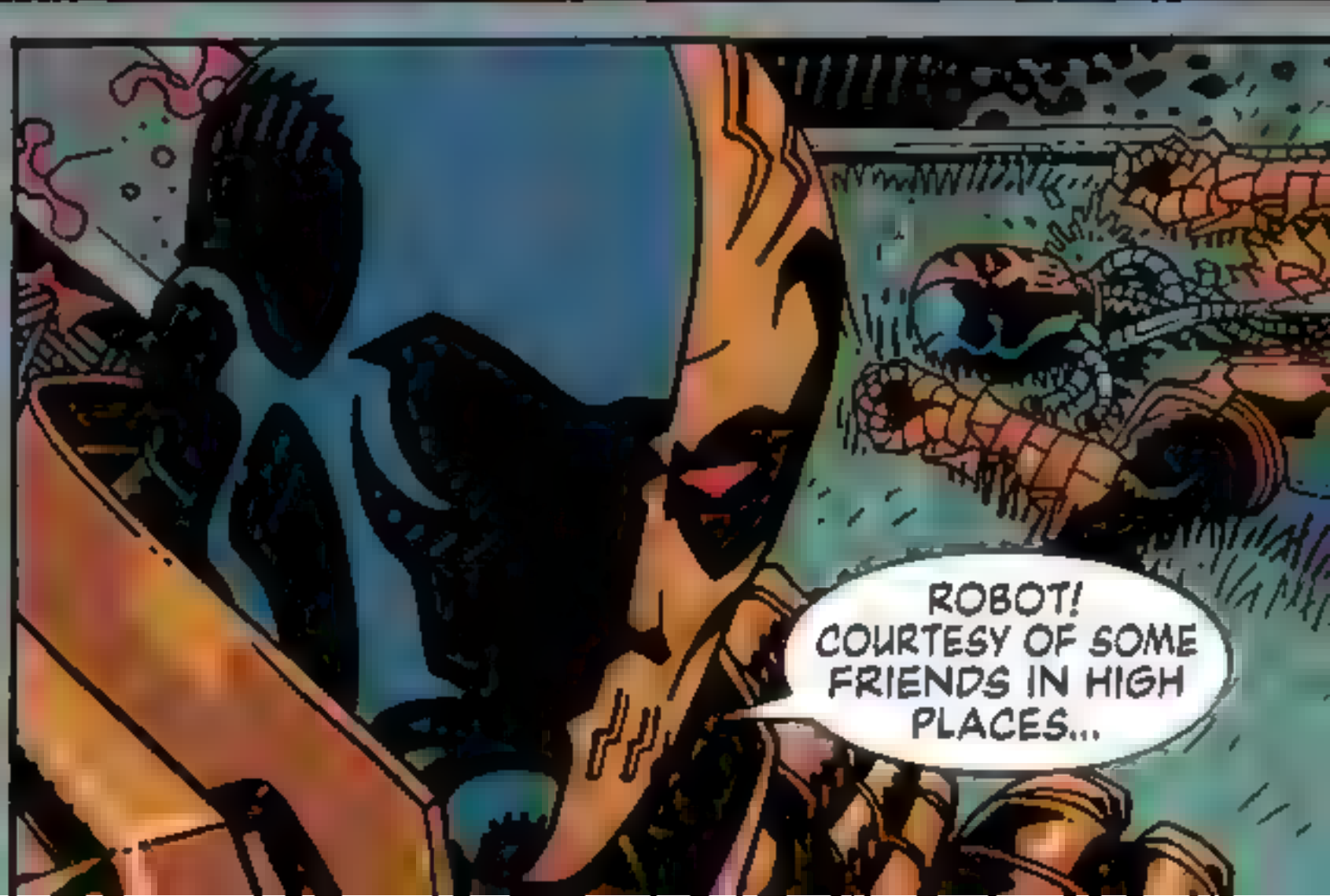
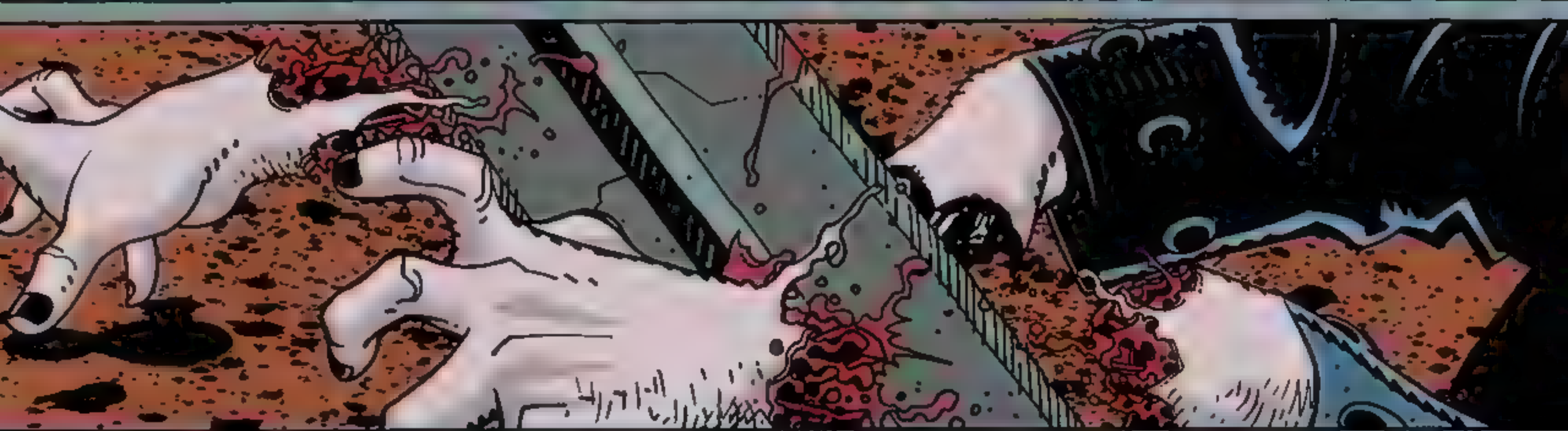
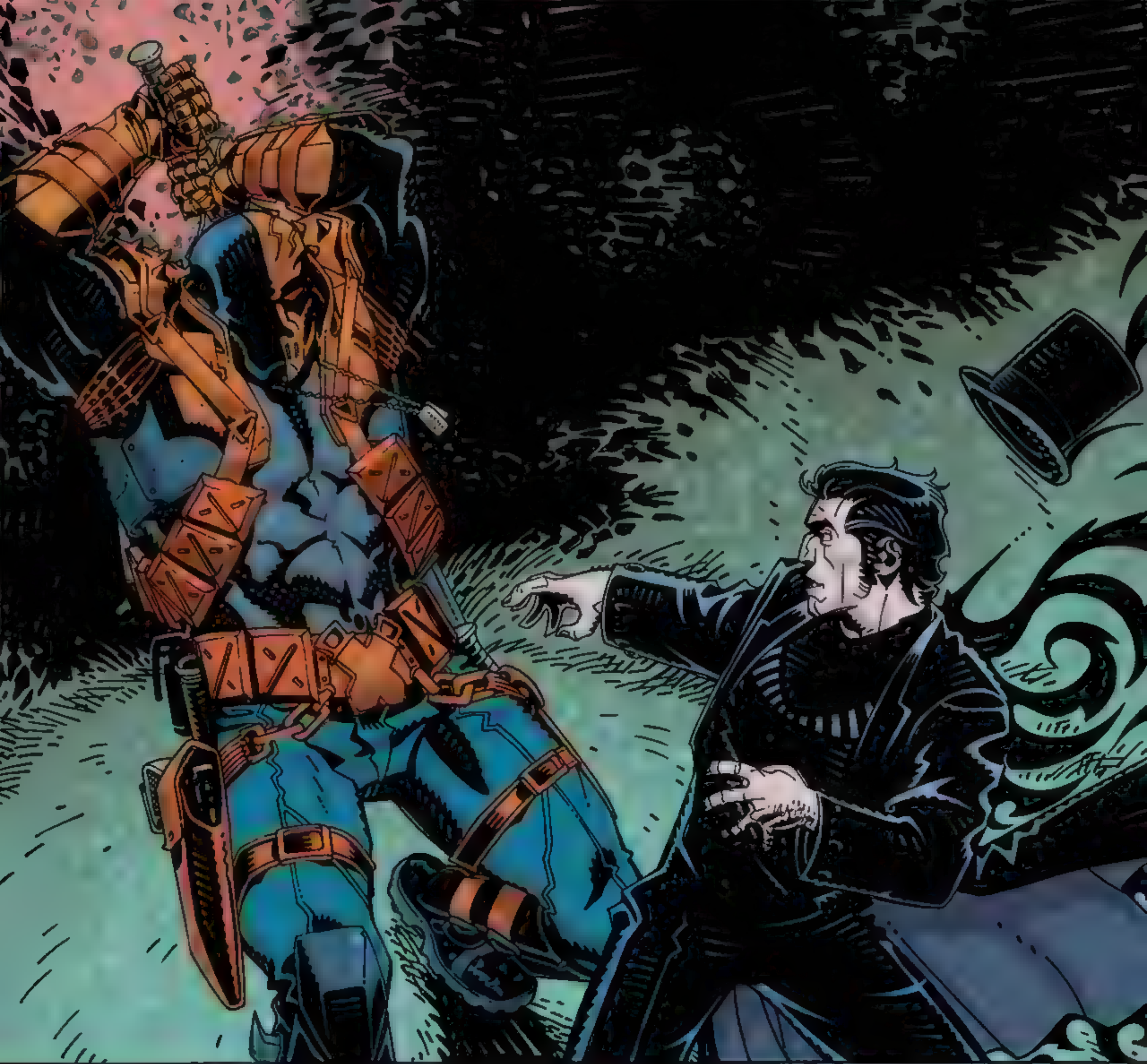








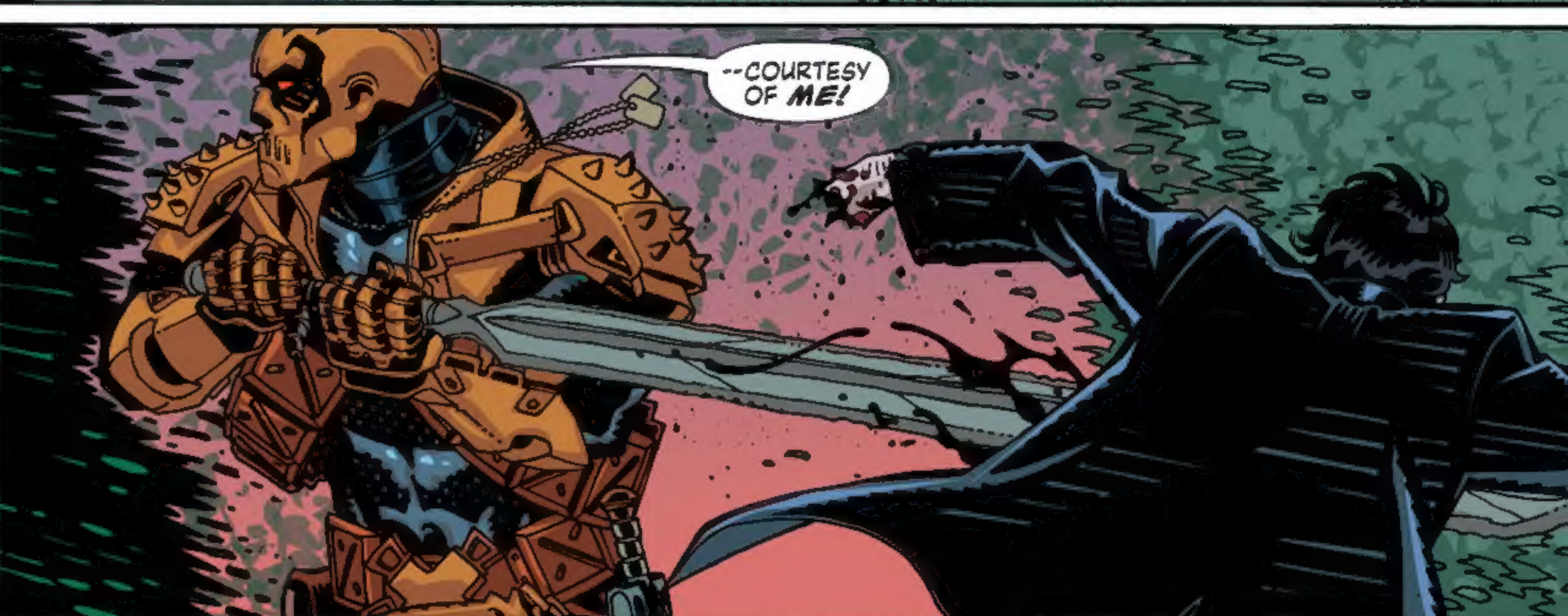








THIS--



--COURTESY  
OF *ME!*



I KNOW...

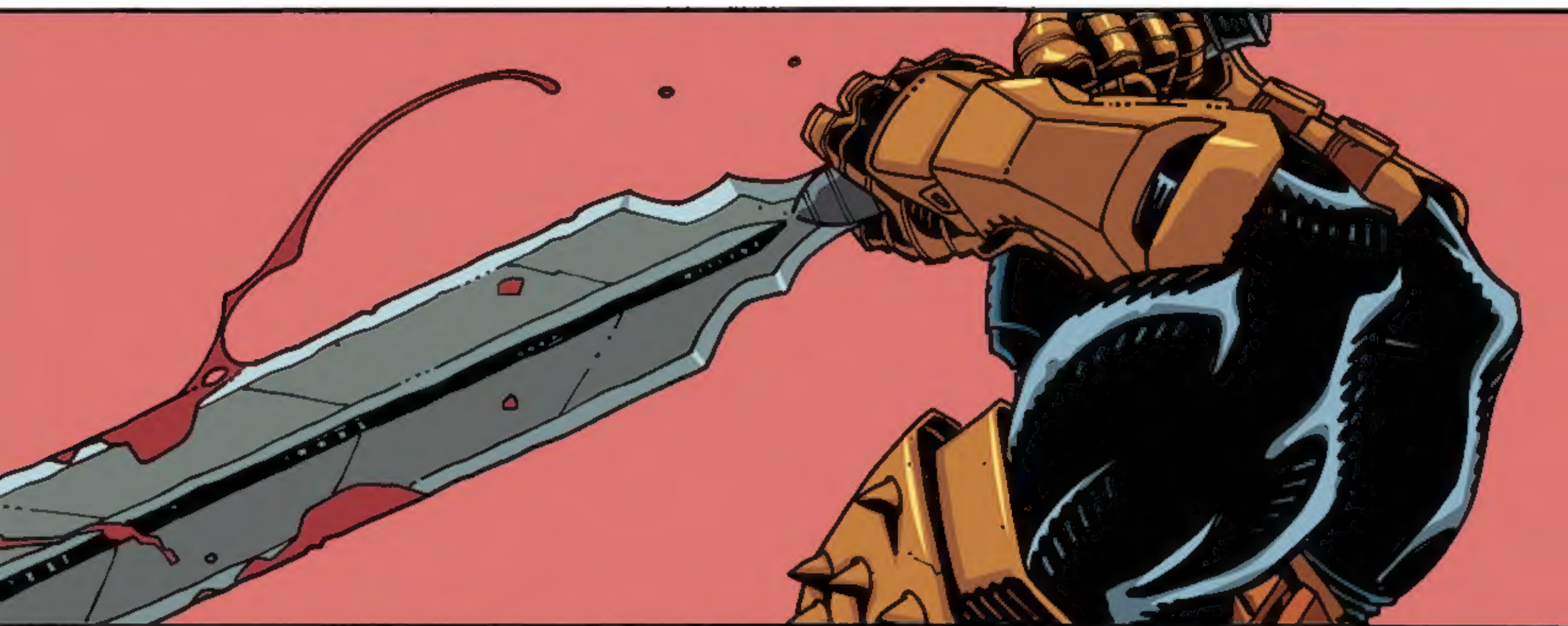


NOTHING  
PERSONAL.





...I KNOW I'VE SAID THIS  
AND THOUGHT THIS AND  
FELT THIS SO MANY TIMES  
BEFORE...



...BUT PERHAPS IN THIS  
INSTANCE, THE REMARK  
BEARS REPEATING...





OCTOBER BRINGS  
MELANCHOLY



# BIRTHDAY

JAMES  
ROBINSON  
writer

GULLY  
HAMNER  
artist

DAVE  
McCAIG  
colors

TODD  
KLEIN  
letters

TONY  
HARRIS  
cover

GULLY  
HAMNER  
variant cover

WIL  
MOSS  
editor



GEOFF JOHNS JIM LEE  
**JUSTICE**  
AUGUE™

**#1**



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**DC COMICS**  
THE NEW 52

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